

**Southeastern Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends  
Minutes of the Yearly Business Meeting  
United Methodist Life Enrichment Center  
Leesburg, Florida  
Fourth Month 9-12, 2009**

**First Plenary Session  
Thursday, April 9, 2009  
4pm**

Friends gathered in open worship for Yearly Business Meeting at 4pm.

Susan Taylor - Clerk  
Gary Arthur - Assistant Clerk  
Andrew Jason - Acting Recording Clerk

Clerk opened 47<sup>th</sup> annual gathering and welcomed all, including young friends who joined us in worship at the opening session for the first time. She thanked Acting Recording Clerks for their willing service during these Yearly Meeting (YM) sessions: Andrew Jason (Miami Monthly Meeting and Jennifer Mendoza (Sarasota Monthly Meeting). Recording Clerk Ed Lesnick had asked for assistance with YM sessions and is abroad.

**Opening Minute:**

In the tradition of Iowa Yearly Meeting Conservative:

**09YBM01** The first meeting for worship with a concern for business of the 47<sup>th</sup> annual gathering of Southeastern Yearly Meeting began with the joy of intergenerational open worship at 4:00 p.m., April 9, 2009.

The clerk read the George Fox quote heading the agenda, from the *SEYM Faith and Practice* draft chapter on *Yearly Meeting, Interim Business Meeting, Yearly Meeting Committees and Yearly Meeting Representatives*.

The thing is this: that if you had (once a year) a Yearly Meeting for Friends to see one another, and know how the affairs of truth prosper, and how Friends do grow in the truth of God, to the comfort and joy of one another in it...all things (by the truth and power of God) may be kept in peace and love, all dwelling in the wisdom of God. -1681.

**Introductions, Mileposts, and Announcements.** The Clerk asked Friends from Monthly Meetings and Worship Groups, along with visitors, to stand as able to introduce themselves and make announcements, if any. [List of all those attending YM gathering is attached.]

Clearwater Monthly Meeting (MM) joined a group of 13 other churches to support the Shepherd Center in Tarpon Springs and helped prepare and serve 125 meals to the poor.

Gainesville MM noted the many members present at annual gathering. The deaths of George Newkirk, William Howard, Marylyn Hall; and Phil Klein, were recalled. The following were

welcomed as new members: Catherine Puckett, Cheryl Demmurs-Holton, Brian Blackmore, Sandy Lyons, and Ceciela Baker. Births included:

Sebastian Skidmore, born to attenders Tracy Jeshow and Frank Skidmore

Seamus Patrick Moran born to Emily Jeske and Kevin Moran; and Audrey Elise born to Phil and Marilyn Hall. Marilyn tragically died two days following a normal birth..

Brendan Osei-Akoto was born to attenders Megan Barolet-Fogarty and Ampofo Darko.

Adelaide Calluna and Malakai Linden were born to Heather Passmore (Baton Rouge MM, sojourning with Gainesville MM) and Paul Gagnon

Miami MM's Eduardo Diaz announced the birth of granddaughter Caelo Melissa Bruce, born to his daughter, Sara Bruce, and noted daughter Lilia is pregnant.

Palm Beach MM reported the addition of three new members: John Palozzi, Jack Balch, and Joe Locke. The membership of Chad Nelson was transferred to Palm Beach. Joe and Ruth Locke transferred out. The marriage of Joan Carney and Chad Nelson was announced.

St Petersburg MM has a new member, Dottie Butler. There are three upcoming weddings: Doug McCown & Rebecca Steele, Wendy Loomis & Steven Shultze, and Josh Remsellag & Sarah Williamson.

Tampa MM had its first ever retreat in March. Tampa thanks Eduardo and Clara Diaz who facilitated.

**Visitors with Letters of Introduction** were welcomed.

Maria Bradley, from Sandy Springs MD Friends meeting attended as the FGC representative. Clerk added that Mariah will be an elder for the clerk to help the clerk be faithful to our discernments regarding SEYM's relationship with Friends United Meeting (FUM). She expressed gratitude for her presence. Mariah, a member of the Traveling Ministries Program, FGC, went through a discernment process before she accepted this role.

Rod Zwirner, was representing Quaker Earth Care Witness.

A traveling minute for Jean James from Richmond, VA MM was noted.

**Other Friends in attendance:**

Sylvia Graves, General Secretary of Friends United Meeting (FUM), brought greetings from FUM General Board of East Africa and the FUM General Board of America.

Darlene Walker, Director of Admissions at Pendle Hill, was here to share Pendle Hill information.

Mary Ellen McNish, General Secretary of AFSC, Walton Lecturer and retreat leader, and her husband, Dave Miller, were in attendance.

Michael Wajda, Philadelphia Yearly Meeting (YM), will do a workshop on Friends General Conference (FGC), and one on Expectant Listening.

Niyonu Spann, member of Chester MM, and Philadelphia YM Committee on Ministry on Racism

Newton Garver from Buffalo MM and New York YM was here as president of the Bolivian Quaker Education Fund.

Alicia Lucasi, a teacher from Bolivia Casa de los Amigos is visiting and teaching in Durham, N.C. She is a recipient of a grant from the Bolivian Quaker Education Fund. Alicia will conduct a workshop with Newton Garver, about the Bolivian Quaker Education Fund.

Larry Jalowiec, representative from *Friends Journal* is in attendance.

Gary Arthur, Assistant Clerk, read excerpts from the Epistle from North Pacific Yearly.

Our Friend in Residence, Ruth Flower, addressed us on our theme “Answering to that of God in Everyone.” She creatively engaged our imaginations to include all people with no exceptions. In sharing with us her career as an activist and a lobbyist, she spoke of her journey from righteous anger to love. We were reminded that we are not called to see that of God in everyone but to answer to what our faith tells us is there. She gave examples of true sharing on a human level that come from expectant listening in our everyday interactions, parallel to our practice in worship.

They also drafted two seasoned minutes, one on War on Drugs and the other on Global Climate Change: The Minute on the War on Drugs calls for a change of national policy away from criminalization of drug use to a public health model. The Minute on Global Climate Change calls upon Friends to make a standing priority and corporate witness in the coming year to take all possible measures to reduce the devastation of global climate change and move us toward more sustainable lifestyles.

The clerk announced, with gratitude, the **SEYM Epistle Committee** for this year: Peter Ackerman, Rolf Hanson, Ann Sundberg, and Mimi McAdoo.

Tom Fennell announced that pastoral care will be available from members of the Worship and Ministry Committee for those who desire it.

There was a Teen announcement from David Hersh about the June 10 ProNica trip the teens are taking. They’ve made some jam and “pretty cool stuff,” including cake that you make in a mug, which is for sale to raise money for the trip. They have raised \$7,000 so far. An additional \$2,000 is needed.

Mary Joe Klingel gave the preliminary **Nominating committee** report. The new clerk for the Gathering committee is Ellie Caldwell. Steve Kinney is staying on committee and Andrea Walsh will remain as registrar for Yearly Gathering and Half Yearly Meeting.

The Finance committee needs additional members. An opening for a representative to the FGC Central Committee was announced. Sybil Brennan is a new member on Nominating Committee. Martha Morris is also on the committee.

The role of the committee is to help us clarify our leadings and joys to work together for SEYM.

**Announcements.**

Karen Putney, Tampa MM, will be doing a workshop on FCNL.

It was announced that 100 counter recruiting guides brought from Gainesville MM. are available for all to take.

The report from the Ad hoc FUM Discernment Committee was made available on front table.

Clerk asked that all read the report and the *Addendum to Documents in Advance* that contains the written personal discernments of a variety of SEYM Friends on SEYM's relationship with FUM. Queries from Space Coast MM regarding the relationship are also included

**The Walton Lecture & Gathering Committee** report was given by Steve Kinney, Committee clerk.

The session concluded with open worship.

**Second Plenary Session  
Friday, April 10, 2009  
10am – 11:45am**

Friends gathered in open worship with a concern for Yearly Meeting business at 10am.

Susan Taylor - Clerk  
Gary Arthur - Assistant Clerk  
Andrew Jason - Acting Recording Clerk

Clerk read part of a message sent from Serrin Anderson, Palm Beach Meeting:

I went to the beach and absorbed Light (and wind and wild waves and sand and joy) which I send on to thee in the manner, I hope, of M. Fell, who had such love for her Quaker compatriots et al- supporting and encouraging to all. Am not putting forth any agenda-just considering what small measure I can play (in absentia) in 'what love can do'- a love which does cross the centuries (doesn't it?) and will be 'in the midst' of all of you and those of us not physically in attendance. Blessings, blessings, Love, Light and Laughter.)

Clerk read a quote by Margaret Fell from, *The Messenger That Goes Before, Reading Margaret Fell for Spiritual Nurture*, Pendle Hill Pamphlet # 398, 2008. Michael Birkel :

Therefore, in that which is pure and eternal,  
which is one in all,  
which leads us into love and unity,  
dwell and abide faithful, and constant, and obedient,  
and ye shall eat the good of the land.

Clerk called the roll of Meetings and Worship groups and welcomed visitors, who introduced themselves.

Alice Lovelace, AFSC-SERO Executive Director, from Atlanta, GA was recognized.

Gary Arthur, Assistant Clerk, read excerpts from the Epistle sent with love to Friends General Conference and Friends Everywhere from the annual Midwinter Gathering of Friends for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Queer concerns held February 15, 2009 at Camp Adams, near Molalla, Oregon. They explored the theme: *Faith calls for Justice on the Same Terms.*

We still have work to do. We are now led to invite you to explore ways you, our meetings and faith communities can walk with us in witnessing to the World what we know experientially; that God's love is indivisible and is not withheld from anyone or any couple seeking to live faithfully in holy union. Our silence and the silence of supportive faith communities make it easier for those claiming to speak with the authority of faith to insert their religious doctrine into the laws that govern our lives, as witnessed recently with the passage of Proposition 8 in California... We ask FGC, monthly meetings and yearly meetings to raise up the issues of equality and the ways in which our LGBTQ families are most in danger when they travel or seek help, whatever those meetings' views on LGBTQ marriage... We want to affirm to you all the power of the witness that our straight allies bring to our own lives and in the wider community. We do not experience this issue as simply a matter of marriage rights, but as a need to affirm and recognize that it is the richness of diversity that has strengthened and nurtured this country and our faith communities through the ages. Friends have long witnessed to a testimony of equality and we ask Friends to join with us in asking our government for equal protection and equal rights for all people.

Herb Haigh, St. Petersburg MM, shared his personal experience with the Quaker tapestries in Kendal, England. An installation of twelve full size photographs, reproductions, and cartoons with museum descriptions of the British Quaker Tapestries on loan from the Arch Street Meeting, Philadelphia Yearly Meeting, were displayed behind the clerks' table.

Herb asked if Friends are interested in a Fox country trip - "the most wonderful and Quakerly part of the world." He asked Friends who are interested to talk with him later.

**Worship and Ministry Committee** report was given by acting clerk, Tom Fennell. He read from Philip Gulley's second book, *If God is Love*. "A remarkable, readable and insightful description of two forms of Christianity: The first is fear base and second is grace filled."

Pendle Hill scholarships. Applications are due 3 weeks before annual gathering. Unfortunately, this year there were no applications. Deadline extended to May 1<sup>st</sup>. Fall semester of 2009 or spring 2010. Those applications should be submitted to Worship & Ministry.

An item, which came up quickly last Monday (April 6, 2009), considered the leading of Cormac Ryder Levenson from Miami Monthly Meeting. Cormac has an undergraduate degree in Theology and a Masters degree from Duke University. He also went to Harvard Divinity School. He wants to be a hospital chaplain as a major career choice and has an internship starting in July. In order to begin the internship he has to be board certified by the Board of Professional Chaplains.

Cormac asked Miami Friends Meeting (MFM) to help with certification, which met with Cormac several times. On April 5, 2009, MFM issued a minute endorsing Cormac as a certified chaplain. The following day Miami contacted SEYM and asked if the Miami procedure is correct . The Miami MM Minute read:

Whereas Cormac Ryder Levenson, having grown up as a member of the Miami Friends Meeting and is presently planning to enter a ministry of clinical pastoral care, the Miami Friends Meeting endorses Cormac Ryder Levenson for his ministry as a certified chaplain for five years beginning on the tenth day of the fourth month of 2009 with the possibility of renewal upon request.

SEYM W&M recommends approval of the process of Miami Monthly Meeting creating this minute.

Friends approved the following minute realizing that the concerns expressed by Friends would need to be addressed by EC at another time.

**09YBM02** Southeastern Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends, meeting in annual session at Leesburg, Florida, in the fourth month, 2009, endorses the process followed by Miami Monthly Meeting in their endorsement of Cormac Ryder Levenson and affirms that the authority on this process rests with the Miami Monthly Meeting.

The SEYM Clerk will write a letter to Cormac Levenson, the Miami Monthly Meeting and the Board of Professional Chaplains in recognition of this minute.

Worship & Ministry will develop queries to help Monthly Meetings write their state of the meeting report. About half of the Monthly Meetings provided written reports for this YBM.

Regarding Intervisitation programs, two are operating. One is a regional meeting. SEYM is divided into geographical regions and meetings within those regions are encouraged to meet together. The other initiative involves recruiting or asking meetings to do personal intervisitation to extend Quaker-to-Quaker connections.

Nancy Fennell, clerk of **Executive Committee** (EC) gave the EC report: Nancy offered a minute describing a process that Friends follow when requesting support financially or otherwise from the Yearly Meeting. Discussion followed.

A Friend asked if someone has a concern about the process at the monthly meeting level, what is the opportunity for appeal? Another expressed that some requests for support might need to go directly to the EC. An Executive Committee member expressed his understanding that if time is of concern, EC can operate quickly when needed. A monthly meeting committee that approves a Friend's leading for which there is financial need from YM, will send a minute to the appropriate YM committee, including EC.

**09YBM03** In the circumstance where an individual requests support, financial or otherwise, from the Yearly Meeting, the Yearly Meeting considers that the individual's request should be considered first by the person's Monthly Meeting and then brought to the appropriate committee of the Yearly Meeting by the Monthly Meeting.

**The Yearly Meeting's Personnel Policy** was brought forward for approval. Becky Steele, St. Petersburg MM, expressed concern that a non-discrimination policy was not included. She suggests written statements to expressly repudiate discrimination. She offered to work on that.

Nancy Fennel suggested that more work was needed on the policy to include the above suggestions. Friends agreed to sending the personnel policy back to the EC, including the suggestions made by Becky Steele, new clerk of Interim Business Meeting.

A request has come forward from the Quaker Universalist Fellowship to see if out-of-print Michener Lectures may be made available for download on the SEYM website. The following minute was approved:

**09YBM04** The Yearly Meeting gives permission to Quaker Universalist Fellowship to make out-of-print Michener and Walton lectures available to download from their website without charge. The administrative secretary shall discern which pamphlets are submitted.

**Minute of Appreciation** for outgoing EC and Interim Business Meeting Clerk, Nancy Fennel was approved.

**09YBM05** Executive Committee is profoundly grateful to Nancy Fennel for her four years of steady, loving, and deeply spirit-led clerking of Interim Business Meeting and Executive Committee. Her discernment and guidance with EC ad hoc Committees has helped to accomplish vital tasks such as a Personnel Policy, Operational Handbook, Child Abuse Prevention Policy, and a process for Yearly Meeting Friends to travel and share their gifts with Monthly Meetings. She has been available to assist with conflict resolution within Monthly Meetings. We thank her for our periods of open worship Her deep interest and abiding faith in our Yearly Meeting inspires many. We are a stronger Yearly Meeting because of her compassionate, dedicated service.

The meeting ended with open worship.

**Third Plenary Session  
Saturday April 11, 2009  
10am - 11:45am**

Susan Taylor – Clerk  
Gary Arthur – Assistant Clerk  
Jennifer Mendoza – Acting Recording Clerk

Meeting began with open worship at 10:10 AM, out of which the clerk read *Galatians* 5: 22-23:

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; Against which there is no law.

Introduction of new attendees to the Plenary Session was made.

The clerk read a tender letter of greeting from Britain Yearly Meeting Committee for Sufferings thanking Southeastern Yearly Meeting for our previous epistle (attached) and providing loving support for our sessions.

The Assistant clerk explained the sale of olive oil by AFSC and a request by Pendle Hill to distribute their pamphlets personally by attending members. Other announcements for the gathering schedule were made.

The clerk asked for “clerking consciousness” to accomplish the agenda in a timely, spirit-filled way.

Neil Anderson gave the **Treasurer’s** report, concluding with a negative budget cash flow but breaking even on expenditures (report attached). The treasurer encouraged prompt payment of apportionments. A Friend asked the treasurer to contact the meetings that had not made their contributions to determine if there were extenuating circumstances. The Treasurer stated he had made contact and would also follow-up with these contacts.

Friends accepted the treasurer’s report. It will be posted on the SEYM web site.

Caroline Lanker, Finance committee clerk, gave the report from the **Finance Committee** pointing out the differences between the current document and the previous budget, including the Teen Trip to Nicaragua using ProNica funds, our relationship with various organizations to whom SEYM makes donations which may be weakened due to lack of consistent representatives, and monthly meeting apportionment percentages. She asked for feedback from the Yearly Meeting members regarding the contribution amounts given to organizations with which SEYM has relationships, especially Quaker Earthcare Witness, The Florida Council of Churches, and FUM contributions. A Friend asked for continued support for the African projects regardless of SEYM’s relationship with FUM.

Gary Arthur read a letter of introduction from Friends General Conference for Niyonu Spann.

Phoebe Anderson, clerk of the visiting committee for Savannah Friends, read the report of the visiting committee from the Yearly Meeting in response to the letter from Savannah Friends requesting consideration for status as a Monthly Meeting in our Yearly Meeting. Friends approved the following minute:

**09YBM06** Southeastern Yearly Meeting gladly welcomes Savannah Friends Meeting as one of its constituent monthly meetings. We look forward to many years of loving association and growth in the Spirit.

The clerk welcomed Savannah Friends to the sessions and as a monthly meeting affiliated with SEYM. Friends warmly concurred.

Davida Johns reported on ProNica activities in Nicaragua. Miranda Steele reported on the Teen Trip to Nicaragua to be held June 10-14, 2009. Lillian Hall reported on the Patch Adams Clown Program projects designed to bring joy to some “dark places” in Nicaragua.

Phoebe Anderson, Clerk of Faith and Practice, reported on draft 4 revisions to the chapter on *The Yearly Meeting, Interim Business Meeting, Yearly Meeting Committees and Yearly Meeting Representatives*. The yearly meeting clerk asked for clarification regarding the language

concerning trustees' responsibilities in the document. The clerk of the committee asked for approval of the document with this clarification which will be worked on over the upcoming year. The document was approved as presented with that understanding.

**09YBM07** Southeastern Yearly Meeting approves the Faith and Practice chapter, *The Yearly Meeting, Interim Business Meeting, Yearly Meeting Committees and Yearly Meeting Representatives*.

Karen Porter led the Young Friends in a lively presentation of a Puppet Show Epistle, Jack and the Beanstalk- Quaker style, with lessons for nonviolent conflict resolution and earth care. The children also learned knitting and showed the baby clothes they made.

### **Reports of Representatives from and to SEYM**

Darlene Walker brought greetings from Pendle Hill and invited Friends to come and participate. Kody Hirsh reported on his visit to Pendle Hill.

Rod Zwirner presented for Quaker Earthcare Witness (QEW) and pointed out their information table and the book, *Right Relationship, Building a Whole Earth Economy*, encouraging ongoing discussion of projects.

Alicia Lucasi spoke on behalf of the Bolivian Quaker Education Fund thanking Friends for support and reporting "it is a dream" and otherwise impossible to come to the United States. She reported that Bolivia has 30,000 Quakers and that she is a third generation Friend.

Herb Haigh, SEYM representative to Friends General Conference (FGC) Central Committee, referred Friends to the website and encouraged families with young people to become involved. He recounted an experience at last year's Gathering and Central Committee. Michael Wajda spoke on behalf of FGC programs and asked the following FGC representatives to speak: Niyonu Spann spoke on behalf of the Committee on Ministry on Racism that works to develop ethnic awareness, hold a place for healing, and eliminate racism in our meetings. She asked Friends to read the newly released book, *Fit for Freedom, Not for Friendship*, by Donna McDaniel and Vanessa Julye. Gita Larson represented Quaker Quest and described the steps to bring the outreach program to individual meetings.

Alice Lovelace, spoke on behalf of the Southeastern Regional Office of AFSC (SERO) with information on lack of immigrants' rights as well as the Emergency Material Aid Program. She asked to work with each monthly meeting to join with their efforts.

Larry Jalowiec spoke on behalf of *Friends Journal* commenting that it was a mirror reflecting what was happening in Quakerism, and was the "mortar that holds Quakers together." He emphasized the independence of the *Journal* that represents every single yearly meeting around the world, and that its circulation was growing.

Sylvia Graves, General Secretary of FUM, spoke regarding the hiring policies of FUM and apologized for the pain that has occurred as a result. She recounted the importance of support for Quaker efforts in Kenya and other global ministries and that *Quaker Life* would be publishing an issue on controversies within FUM, including the personnel policy.

Karen Putney, spoke on behalf of Friends Committee on National Legislation (FCNL). Their resources are decreased. She encouraged Friends to interact with government officials through

FCNL efforts to do the work of Friendly persuasion. She also described a program at the William Penn House to be held the first two weeks of July, 2008. She offered to visit monthly meetings.

The third session closed with open worship.

**Fourth Plenary Session  
Saturday, April 11, 2009  
1pm - 2:30pm**

Susan Taylor – Clerk  
Gary Arthur – Assistant Clerk  
Jennifer Mendoza – Acting Recording Clerk

The meeting began with silent worship at 1:05pm.

**Discernment regarding FUM**

The clerk encouraged Friends to be open and faithful to the winds of the Spirit. She read highlights from the documents in advance and events that had happened since Yearly Meeting sessions, 2007.

Two previously approved minutes were reviewed:

- ❖ Minute **#149, 1971**: Friends gathered at SEYM find themselves desirous of joining with Friends United Meeting and Friends General Conference to further the growth and unity of Friend's and Friend's influence, to repay to some extent the warm help and assistance we have received from both bodies and to give our Young Friends a pattern of unity to follow and to develop further.
- ❖ Minute **07YBM15**.

Also considered:

- ❖ FUM has stated that every member does not have to accept the Richmond Declaration to be a member of FUM.
- ❖ The FUM board wrote a letter affirming that all humans are loved by God, disavowing any violence as contrary to the way to Christ.
- ❖ The clerk recounted that the ad hoc Committee on SEYM's relationship with FUM has met five times. Phoebe Anderson read the ad hoc Committee's report into the record ending with "What would love have us do?" [The report is attached]

The clerk asked for Friends to enter into worship in expectant waiting on God to find way forward. A Friend commented on procedural questions regarding the minute approved in 2007 that did not allow for continuing revelation. A Friend shared that FUM wanted time to work on

the issues- seeking discernment themselves. She would love to give them time to see where they are. Another spoke from the silence recalling her feelings similar to a personal divorce and asked additional time to seek discernment. Another spoke from the silence regarding where Spirit has led in the past year remembering that Quakers have always been seekers of truth and that over the last two years FUM "has been crumbling around the corners" and that SEYM "should just get out of the way" but "be there...to find a way to say yes.... to be part of the safety net to catch" the members who would leave FUM. Another Friend ministered from the silence that he is a Peace Psychologist and encouraged engagement as the way of nonviolent conflict resolution and "unity with people who think differently than I do." He stated that it was wrong of him to stay away from Yearly Meeting and that it is preferable to speak truth to power. Another Friend spoke from the silence recounting the deep pain this issue has caused her- this is like a marriage that has gone bad and defined the rift as abuse where traditional conflict resolution methods are not appropriate; she is tired of the long, drawn out abuse and is not in unity with extending this into the future. Another Friend spoke from the silence recounting her involvement with Friends World Committee for Consultation (FWCC), an organization that offers no affiliation, and calls for consultation toward a common goal more than concurrence. Another Friend spoke from the silence recounting her experience seeking discernment for the past two years focusing on the testimony from gay members to love those who disagree and reiterated to try what love can do. Another Friend spoke from the silence on the subject of loving without receiving any return, not running away, and sitting with the pain with brothers and sisters to seek peace with those who disagree "at home." Another Friend affirmed the previous expression. Another Friend spoke from the silence pointing to the strict definition of marriage in the FUM personnel policy as the focus of concern. Another spoke from the silence expressing concern that young people care that "we walk the talk," that although we are not in unity "we care a lot" and honor those that are led. Another rose from the silence recounting his history with gender identity issues encouraging continued interaction with "those you can no longer live with" recommending a "close relationship with FUM and continuing to grow." The Clerk reminded Friends that she had made a commitment to SEYM Friends that this session would not take time away from scheduled workshops- there are other issues Friends are concerned about. She stated that the sense of the meeting was that Friends are not in unity and asked that a minute be composed after the session to bring forward at the next plenary session. Friends who were interested were invited to come forward to join the clerk and assistant clerk in composing the minute.

The session ended with open worship.

**Fifth Plenary Session  
Sunday April 12, 2009  
9am - 11:15am**

Susan Taylor – Clerk  
Gary Arthur – Assistant Clerk  
Jennifer Mendoza – Acting Recording Clerk

The meeting began with open worship at 9:05am.

The clerk began with a reading from Luke 24: 24-36.

The assistant clerk made several announcements: sale of olive oil, availability of "Roadmap for Peace" posters, and water bottles available for home meetings.

The clerk revisited the concerns over the fourth plenary session regarding process and asked Friends for forgiveness if they felt she had not been faithful in the process. She reported that a group met following the plenary session and composed two minutes. Friends who had come forward to help the clerk and assistant clerk with the minute were Becky Steele, St. Petersburg Meeting; Mimi McAdoo and Freddie WindRiver, Sarasota, and Lou Putney, Tampa. Mariah Bradley, Baltimore YM, held the group in the Light.

One minute addressed the 2007 minute and the other addressed the continued lack of unity on the issue of affiliation with FUM. The assistant clerk read the two minutes.

Editing suggestions from the attendees were discussed. The assistant clerk recommended an affirmative attitude toward finding a spirit-led resolution to the issue.

A Friend focused on the importance of recognizing the labor put into the 2007 minute and that both minutes presented for approval today were important. The second minute was needed or else we would be remaining in affiliation with FUM.

Another Friend reported "great disappointment" and that it was hard to leave "someone behind." He recounted passing a minute in favor of gay marriage in SEYM. He recommended giving all the help to oppressed people and recounted the history of Quakers and the Underground Railroad, and that we needed to go forward to support our "gay and lesbian Friends".

A Friend suggested combining both minutes and another likened the situation to a tough love effort. Yet another Friend strongly reflected that we have unity in abhorrence to the personnel policy of FUM and that the issue was the choice of what to do about it.

A Friend recommended that discernment on the second minute needed to proceed first. Another Friend commented that Quakers do not move "forward in the light of disunity."

The assistant clerk re-read the preamble that associated the two minutes. A Friend asked to change the word "representatives" to observers. Another asked to affirm our unity in being against the personnel policy of FUM and "put that in black and white" and omit the language of being tired and frustrated to focus on the language of love and engagement, stating "who we are clearly." Another asked that we state how we (SEYM) feel and "then present it to FUM." The assistant clerk re-read the amended minute as a draft.

One Friend asked to clarify language in the minute. Another commented that we say both that we are frustrated and in support of gay and lesbian Friends and avoid passive aggressive language, adding "this is our truth and that is joyful." . The assistant clerk re-read another amended draft of the minute. Another Friend asked to consider the impact of cut funds to FUM general fund. Another quoted Margaret Meade who made the point that all humans have homosexual traits. Another commented that she approved the minute as read and thus allow travel money to observers to FUM just as to sanctioned representatives. Another suggested a brief addition to "welcome FUM visitors" to SEYM. Another Friend asked that we state "we remain frustrated but nevertheless blessed." A Friend asked for a focus on the discernment of the second minute. The assistant clerk re-read the amended minute. The second minute was approved as read. The following minutes were approved, with Lyn Cope standing aside from approval of the first minute as she considered it unnecessary repetition.

**09YBM08** With regard to the following language from SEYM minute 07YBM15 approved two years ago: "If at the end of the two year period our membership is not in unity to renew the relationship, SEYM will permanently lay down our membership in F.U.M."

We are in unity that one yearly meeting session's discernment cannot be directed by another, and that Yearly Meeting 2009 is not bound by that 2007 directive. We cannot be bound by the action prescribed in that minute, as we realize that discernment, being a corporate process, cannot be held in default from a discussion which was unresolved in its own time. Our discernment about affiliation with FUM is an ongoing process, and needs to acknowledge continuing revelation. It will be discerned when the Spirit has led us into unity.

**09YBM09** With regard to the worshipful process in which we have engaged this year in order to discern our way forward, including meetings of the ad hoc discernment committee as well as business sessions at this yearly meeting, the results are incomplete. We moved with an intention of not letting this issue drain the energy of our Gathering and so allowed that other concerns and Yearly Meeting business have their allotted time. We did hear strong witness to feelings of pain and abuse brought on by the existence of the FUM Personnel Policy. We also heard a call to wait with fresh patience in order to let us try what love will do. We heard a call for engagement being the way of conflict resolution. We recognize that our body is fatigued by our engagement in this issue. We are both frustrated and blessed in our efforts to resolve the issue, and we will need to find time to do so. Until then, our formal membership in FUM will remain suspended. SEYM fully supports and values the spiritual gifts of our gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, and queer Friends, and we are in unity that we do not accept FUM's existing personnel policy. We will contribute to selected FUM projects, and we will continue to support observers to FUM gatherings, and to welcome visitors from FUM among us. We seek to maintain a loving relationship with Friends United Meeting.

Young Friends came forward to present their epistle. Middle and Teen Friends presented their epistle from their HIPP (Help Increase the Peace Project) workshop, including a demonstration of a pattern naming game with ball tossing to each other.

Susan Taylor, clerk of the naming committee that is responsible for choosing the SEYM Nominating Committee, read the committee's report. Sybil Ann Brennan has been selected to serve on the Nominating Committee for a three year term: 2009-2012.

Mary Jo Klingel read the report of the **Nominating committee**, acknowledging the help of Caroline Lanker on the finance committee. There was a discussion regarding the archives committee that was referred back to committee until 2010. Mary Jo thanked all those she worked with in the nominating process. [The report is attached.]

**09YBM10** Southeastern Yearly Meeting approves the nominating committee report.

Caroline Lanker, clerk, finance committee, read two items remaining from the fourth plenary of the finance committee report. She proposed a minute to approve the budget with modifications as read.

**09YBM11** SEYM approves the General Fund budget for the fiscal year 2010 (6/1/2009 – 5/31/2010) as published in the documents in advance with the following modification: the contribution to QEW shall be increased by \$75.00 to \$200 and a corresponding increase shall be made to the income from Meetings and Worship Groups line.

Caroline Lanker proposed an additional minute to designate funds for FUM to be divided equally between Ramallah Friends School and Kaimosi Hospital. There was discussion as to whether some of the funds should be designated for *Quaker Life* magazine since it will be publishing an issue on controversies within FUM.. A Friend commented that \$100.00 is already designated as a line item contribution to *Quaker Life*. The clerk asked for approval to let the minute stand as a contribution to FUM.

**09YBM12** The donation of \$500 for FUM in the fiscal year 2010 General Fund budget shall be designated as half each for Ramallah Friends School and the Kaimosi Hospital.

Barbara Letsch, clerk, SEYM Earthcare Working Group, read a poem as an introduction to the annual report. The Yearly Meeting planted a donated crepe myrtle tree and donated extra funds remaining (\$60) to the Teens' Nicaragua trip. She reported that she would notify Friends of a website where carbon footprints can be calculated.

The Yearly Meeting approved the following minutes:

**09YBM13** The Earthcare Working Group is inspired to help educate the Yearly Meeting community and to facilitate action that would reduce our impact on earthly resources. We encourage each Monthly meeting to have a meeting for discernment contemplating John Woolman's statement: "The produce of the Earth is a gift from our Creator to the inhabitants, and to impoverish the Earth now to support outward greatness appears to be an injury to the succeeding age." Friends are asked to choose how best to reduce our carbon footprint for Yearly Meeting travel.

**09YBM14** The Earthcare Working Group recognized the urgency of continued care for the Earth, in keeping with our Testimonies of simplicity and integrity, and acknowledges Quaker Earthcare Witness (QEW) as the primary Quaker organization working to heal the Earth and all her Creatures. To that end, the Earthcare working Group wishes to encourage each Monthly Meeting to appoint a Monthly Meeting representative to QEW. We also ask that SEYM encourage each Monthly Meeting to include a line item donation in their budget to QEW.

Steve Kinney read the Gathering Committee Report: Our 2010 speakers will be Betsy Neele and Richard Mitchell of Lexington, Kentucky Monthly Meeting., Ohio Valley Yearly Meeting. Their topic will be the historical Jesus, based on a workshop at FGC Gathering they have given for many years. Please communicate when (not if...) you feel led to serve on the committee, offer a workshop or interest group next year, or help with youth. We thank everyone for their help in making this YM a joyful experience.

The clerk, Susan Taylor, read a minute of appreciation.

**09YBM15** Southeastern Yearly Meeting is deeply grateful to everyone who worked so hard, with love, to make our annual Gathering possible. We thank Mary Ellen McNish, our Walton lecturer, for her generosity and time in grounding us in living faithfully, with hope, through times of struggle. We were refreshed by the beauty of the grounds and friendly, accommodating staff of the United Methodist Life Enrichment Center.

The *Friends Journal* representative asked if an SEYM e-mail data base could be sent to the Friends Journal so thank you notes could be sent to contributors. There were no more SEYM Directories available.

**09YBM16** Southeastern Yearly Meeting approves providing an e-mail data base to the Friends Journal so that thank notes can be sent out to contributors.

Mary Ellen McNish recommended that the Executive Committee take under consideration way forward in the continuing process of discerning SEYM's relationship with FUM.

**The Wee and Young Friends' Epistle** for SEYM 2009 was read as follows:

The young and wee Friends, though small in number, were a closely knit group. Through creating puppets and scenery for their play, as well as rewriting a story to use Quaker values, they explored the testimonies of stewardship, community, and simplicity. Signed: Catherine, Karen, Tor, Lis, Kate, Christi, Ann, Alina, and Keiran.

**The Middle and Teen Friends' Epistle** for SEYM 2009 was read as follows:

This Wednesday we convened for the Junior Yearly Meeting. We started our Help Increase the Peace workshop, or HIPP, by designating the gold room as a no put-down zone. On Thursday, we talked about what we define as violent and nonviolent acts. Continuing our HIPP workshop, we discussed different ways of handling and reacting to potentially violent situations. Then during the river crossing game, we collaborated with each other and practiced team working skills. Later, we discussed human nature and whether all of us are inherently violent. On Friday, our focus turned to transforming power. However, we first listened to Cathy Gaskill relate old memories of her father at Fisk University and his quartet with Bayard Rustin. Afterwards, we participated in a game of Jailbreak and, during discussion, utilized the gathering statement: "the weirdest thing I ever ate was..." That afternoon, we held a fish bowl with the adults and learned about their views on legalization of drugs. During the fish bowl, we were asked questions to do with our views on our peers. These questions later came into play when the representatives from AFSC, Tim and Darlene, told us about counter recruiting. Saturday, we talked about prejudice and discrimination. Later, those of us joining the Nicaragua trip convened and were advised on what to do and definitely not to do. That afternoon, those of us not going to Nicaragua, hipped and hopped as the Easter Bunnies for our younger Friends. That night, we finished HIPP and proceeded to convene our Meeting for Worship with concern for Business and nominated two clerks, David Hersh and Zach Loomas. We decided our theme for next year will be world cultures. That night, or rather this morning, teen movie night ended. Throughout this Gathering,

we have collected donations for the Nicaragua trip by selling our homemade goods such as cake in a cup and strawberry jam. Those who participated in this exciting venture are quite proud of their progress of \$611.00 fund raising for the trip with the help of Davida Johns.

Steve Kinney read the **Epistle for the 47<sup>th</sup> Southeastern Yearly Meeting Gathering**. Also, formatted copies of the epistle are attached.

We gathered at the Florida United Methodist Life Enrichment Center, Leesburg, Florida for the 47<sup>th</sup> Southeastern Yearly Meeting for worship with a concern for business, on April 8-12, 2009. A breeze was at our backs this year, bringing visiting Friends from afar to help us discern and be faithful to the winds of the Spirit:

The wind blows where it pleases;  
you can hear its sound,  
but you cannot tell where it comes from  
or where it is going.  
So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit.  
—*John 3:8 The New Jerusalem Bible*

This year the Walton workshops and lecture were given by Mary Ellen McNish, General Secretary of the American Friends Service Committee. Her topic dealt with the hopes and struggles of her life, of the American Friends Service Committee, and of the Society of Friends. Both insightful and at times disturbing, the breadth of Mary Ellen's faithful service in the light was clearly evident and is an example of Rufus Jones' exhortation:

*Love won't do it without the human hand and the human heart.* —Elizabeth Watson, 1980

In the discussion that followed, working for Compassionate peace was compared with working for a Just peace. Either way, "*Do not hesitate to stand with the oppressed.*" —Elizabeth Watson, 1980

This year's agenda also included a reopening of the Friends United Meeting affiliation concern after a two-year respite for seasoning and prayerful consideration. We were blessed and thankful for the presence of FUM's General Secretary, Sylvia Graves, throughout this week and wish to publish here the minutes agreed upon in our closing plenary session:

Lyn Cope was minuted as standing aside from approval of the first minute as she considered it unnecessary repetition:

**09YBM11:** With regard to the following language from SEYM minute 07YBM15 approved two years ago:

If at the end of the two year period our membership is not in unity to renew the relationship, SEYM will permanently lay down our membership in F.U.M.," we are in unity that one yearly meeting session's discernment cannot be directed by another, and that Yearly Meeting 2009 is not bound by that 2007 directive. We cannot be

bound by the action prescribed in that minute, as we realize that discernment, being a corporate process, cannot be held in default from a discussion which was unresolved in its own time. Our discernment about affiliation with FUM is an ongoing process, and needs to acknowledge continuing revelation. It will be discerned when the Spirit has led us into unity.

**09YBM12:** With regard to the worshipful process in which we have engaged this year in order to discern our way forward, including meetings of the ad hoc discernment committee as well as business sessions at this yearly meeting, the results are incomplete. We moved with an intention of not letting this issue drain the energy of our gathering, and so allowed that other concerns and Yearly Meeting business have their allotted time. We did hear strong witness to feelings of pain and abuse brought on by the existence of the FUM Personnel Policy. We also heard a call to wait with fresh patience in order to let us try what love will do. We heard a call for engagement being the way of conflict resolution. We recognize that our body is fatigued by our engagement in this issue. We are both frustrated and blessed in our efforts to resolve the issue, and we will need to find time to do so. Until then, our formal membership in FUM will remain suspended. SEYM fully supports and values the spiritual gifts of our gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, and queer Friends, and we are in unity that we do not accept FUM's existing personnel policy. We will contribute to selected FUM projects, and we will continue to support observers to FUM gatherings and to welcome visitors from FUM among us. We seek to maintain a loving relationship with Friends United Meeting.

Throughout the week, workshops were plentiful, the weather sensational, and our children wonderful. The Wee Friends' presentation of Jack and the Beanstalk—a Quaker perspective—was as charming as our Teen Friends' upcoming ProNica trip to Nicaragua is inspiring. Early worship by the lake began each day with the reaffirming presence of the Spirit.

As our First Day session closed and we sat in open worship, we were mindful, and we wish to remind you, dear reader:

*That the only security is love —  
the love we have given  
and the love we have received.*  
—Elizabeth Watson, 1980

Our business complete,  
Our worship ended,  
Our service begins anew.

**09YBM17** The meeting approved, with gratitude, the Epistle as read.

The clerk acknowledged the presence of the many members of the Diaz family and “Happy Birthday” was sung to a daughter.

The concluding plenary session of YBM ended 11:15am and was followed by meeting for worship.

**YEARLY MEETING GATHERING ATTENDEES  
2009**

Ackerman	Peter	South Florida
Andersen	Neil	Tallahassee MM
Andersen	Phoebe B	Tallahassee MM
Applen	June	Jacksonville MM
Arrington	Karen	Gainesville MM
Arthur	Gary	Palm Beach MM
Beardsley	Gene	Gainesville MM
Beardsley	Richard	Gainesville MM
Bechtel	Carol	Sarasota MM
Begin	Jessica	Miami MM
Begin	Karyn	Miami MM
Benjar	Alice	Tallahassee MM
Bejnar	Tor	Tallahassee MM
Benton	Jocelyn	Tampa MM
Blackburn	Tom	Tampa MM
Blackmore	Brian	Gainesville MM
Bradley	Maria	FGC & BYM Intervisitation Program
Branam	Sandy	Savannah MM
Brennan	Sybil	Gainesville MM
Brodhead	Janiece	Savannah MM
Brodhead	Peter	Savannah MM
Brookes	Connie	Friends Fiduciary
Bruce	Caelo	Miami MM
Bruce	Joel	Miami MM
Bruce	Sarah	Miami MM
Buskirk	Jeannie	Gainesville MM
Cain	Jim	Deland PM
Caldwell	Eleanor	Palm Beach MM
Carlie	Amy	Orlando MM
Carlie	Vicki	Orlando MM
Centero-Hall	Trevor	Managua WG
Cook	Joel	Palm Beach MM
Coolican	Shauna	Palm Beach MM
Cope	Lyn	Space Coast MM
Coultas	Ginny	Tallahassee MM
Coultas	Lynn	Tallahassee MM
Dameron	Amadeus	St. Petersburg MM
Dameron	Carol	St. Petersburg MM
Daniels	Floyd	
Darko	Ampofo	Gainesville MM
Darko	Brendan	Gainesville MM
Darko	Kieran	Gainesville MM
Day	Peter R	Clearwater MM
Day	Susan	Clearwater MM
Demers-Holton	Cheryl	Gainesville MM
Diaz-Sullivan	Alicia	Miami MM
Diaz	Clara	Miami MM
Diaz	Eduardo	Miami MM
Dineen	Chuck	Deland PM
Doan	Petra	Tallahassee MM
Dominguez	Nicole	Gainesville MM
Emerson	Doris	Miami MM
Fennell	Nancy	Ft. Myers MM
Fennell	Tom	Ft. Myers MM
Fogarty-Barolet	Megan	Gainesville MM
Franzen	Tim	AFSC/SERO
Garver	Newton	Bolivian Quaker Education Fund
Gaskill	Cathy	Deland PM
Geiger	Al	Deland PM
Geiger	Wendy Clarissa	Jacksonville

**YEARLY MEETING GATHERING ATTENDEES  
2009**

Gramigna	Darlene	AFSC, Chicago
Graves	Sylvia	Friends United Meeting
Guy	Roger G. "Joe"	Savannah MM
Haecker	Cecilia	Gainesville MM
Haigh	Herb	St. Petersburg MM
Haigh	Pam	St. Petersburg MM
Hall	Lillian	Managua WG
Hanson	Rolf	Sarasota MM
Hersh	Carl	Miami MM
Hersh	David	Miami MM
Hersh	Kathy	Miami MM
Hersh	Kody	Miami MM
Heys	Sandra	Palm Beach MM
Hotchkiss	Connie	St. Petersburg MM
Hotchkiss	Ed	St. Petersburg MM
Hulett	Bart	Gainesville MM
Humphrey	Brian	Ft. Lauderdale MM
Jalowiec	Larry	Richmond VA MM
James	Hazel	Baltimore YM
Jason	Andrew	Miami MM
Jerome	Ann	Deland PM
Johns	Davida	St. Petersburg MM
Jordan	Jonathan	Winter Park MM
Kamphausen	Liz	Tallahassee MM
Kant-Rauch	Noah	Tallahassee MM
Kehm	Melady	Ft. Myers MM
Kinney	Steve	Tampa MM
Klingel	Mary Jo	Ft. Lauderdale MM
Lanker	Caroline	Lake Wales WG
Larson	Gita	FGC/Quaker Quest
Lemke	Dustin	Tampa MM
Letsch	Barbara	Palm Beach
Logan	Steve	Sarasota MM
Logan	Jamie	Sarasota MM
Logan	Zach	Sarasota MM
Logan - Rakyta	Nancyrose	Sarasota MM
Loomas	Wendy	St. Petersburg MM
Lovelace	Alice	AFSC/SERO
Lucasi	Alicia	Los Amigos, Bolivia
Marcinkowski	Tom	Space Coast MM
Mariner	Vicki	Tallahassee MM
McAdoo	Mimi	Sarasota MM
McCown	Doug	St. Petersburg MM
McNish	Mary Ellen	AFSC
Meade	Jim	Tallahassee MM
Mendoza	Jennifer	Sarasota MM
Miller	David	FGC
Morris	Martha	Winter Park MM
Murphree	Mike	U.U. Church, Tallahassee
Murphy	Pat	Sarasota MM
Murray	Mary	St. Petersburg MM
Nelson	Chad	Palm Beach MM
Nelson	Joan	Palm Beach MM
Odum	Betty	Gainesville MM
Perch	Frank	Savannah MM
Perch	Liz	Savannah MM
Petersen	Lynn	Deland PM
Pino	Humberto	Miami MM
Pino	Lilia	Miami MM
Porter	Christi	Gainesville MM
Porter	Jim	Gainesville MM

**YEARLY MEETING GATHERING ATTENDEES  
2009**

Porter	Karen	Gainesville MM
Prather	Angela	Tallahassee MM
Puckett	Catherine	Gainesville MM
Putney	Karen	Tampa MM
Putney	Lou	Tampa MM
Ray	Connie	Gainesville MM
Rakytá	David	Sarasota MM
Richardson	Kristen	AFSC
Rowe	Genevieve	Sarasota MM
Rowe	Kurt	Sarasota MM
Rushforth	Richard	Clearwater MM
Rushforth	Robert	Clearwater MM
Sallen	Jane	Palm Beach MM
Schendel	Jean	St. Petersburg MM
Schmalstig	Alan	Orlando MM
Schmalstig	Judy	Orlando MM
Shea	Charlotte	Miami MM
Shea	Winslow	Miami MM
Sims	Sheree	Gainesville MM
Spann	Niyonu	Chester MM, PYM
Steele	Becky	St. Petersburg MM
Steele	Miranda	St. Petersburg MM
Stewart	Lisa	Palm Beach MM
Stillman	Ann	Sarasota MM
Sullivan	Alina	Miami MM
Sullivan	Perry	Miami MM
Sullivan	Sean	Miami MM
Sundberg	Ann	Sarasota MM
Sundberg	Katie	Sarasota MM
Sundberg	Lis	Sarasota MM
Taylor	Susan	Tallahassee MM
Triscritti	Nancy	Tampa MM
Wajda	Michael	F G C
Walker	Darlene	Pendle Hill
Walsh	Andrea	Tampa MM
Webber	Al	Ft. Myers MM
Webber	Marilyn	Ft. Myers MM
Wilkins	Nil	Tampa MM
Windriver	Freddie	Sarasota MM
Wolfe	Barbara	Tampa MM
Yocum	Cece	Tampa MM
Zingaro	Eileen	Clearwater MM
Zwirner	Rod	Quaker Earthcare Witness

# The FUM Discernment Committee Report

## March 27, 2009

Our committee began at Southeastern Yearly Meeting's Executive Committee Meeting on October 6, 2007, with the following minute, which was approved by the Yearly Meeting in 2008.

*07EC18 – EC recommends appointment of a committee to meet in worship and prayer to discern way forward on SEYM's relationship with FUM, to be convened by Lisa Stewart until YBM 2008.*

*EC expresses its trust in the guidance of the Spirit and the process of spiritual discernment for this committee.*

*Those who feel called to serve shall communicate that calling to Lisa Stewart. The committee shall report in YBM 2009.*

We met as a committee a total of five times at various meetinghouses throughout the state, and one additional scheduled meeting was cancelled. Our process was to meet for an entire day and spend most of that time in worship, both worship and worship sharing. The process was deep and transformative. We received many gifts from sitting together in worship.

Previously, we had all struggled within our own meetings and within the yearly meeting to come to unity about whether to remain affiliated or to disaffiliate from FUM. We acknowledged that we were “beyond our Light” and sought the silence of worship to be open to the guidance of the Spirit.

We were also well aware of the history of the FUM hiring policy and shared the outrage of most in our yearly meeting that any Quaker policy in any Quaker organization would be so discriminatory of our beloved gay and lesbian Friends. Our living the testimony of equality and our expectation that Friends everywhere see that of God in all led us to consider disaffiliation with FUM. We also know that many SEYM Friends have deep and personal connections with FUM. We remember well our history and the splits of the 1800's, only to lead to a long period of reconciliation. And we wondered how a “people of peace” could walk away from conflict with one another and not try hard to resolve it.

As we looked more deeply at FUM, we became concerned about our philosophical and theological differences. Many members of SEYM could not affirm the Richmond Declaration. Others felt concern about the hierarchical power structure within FUM. As one of our committee said, “If we were now deciding whether to join FUM, I would not want to. But we are members, so what do we do now?” SEYM struggled for two years with these issues in our yearly meeting plenaries and could not come to unity on any action.

Within the SEYM-FUM Discernment committee, we were blessed with both new understandings and openings. It became clear to us early on that we could not focus on the “wrongs” of FUM without looking at our own behavior and our tendency to judgment and moral outrage, to seeing them as the “other” and the “problem”. We struggled to find ways to be a loving witness. FUM’s work is to grapple with their hiring policy and its implications. SEYM’s work is to bear witness to the Truth revealed by our corporate measure of the Light.

Our openings were both simple and deep. They were:

- **Love God and love one another.**

We are called to Love God with all of our heart, mind, soul and strength, and we are called to love everyone, especially those with whom our measure of the Light may differ.

- **Rather than judgment, seek forgiveness.**

We are called to be mindful of judging others and rather seek their forgiveness instead. And, we are called as well to be forgiving of those who also judge us.

- **Listen and seek healing.**

We are called to be about the process of listening to and helping Friends heal who are hurt by discrimination and division, as well as called to promote spiritual healing of all Friends through deep listening, forgiveness and love.

These openings that we received from the Spirit through extended worship and worship sharing on the surface offered no particular guidance on the resolution of the SEYM-FUM relationship. However, continued prayer and discernment brought clarity that following these openings is where God has called us to do our work. Instead of clarity regarding FUM, we have been called to the greater action of love, forgiveness and healing. The challenge now is to follow our calling/leading.

In our last meeting (Gainesville, 2-28-09) we checked in with one another and found that we as a committee were again not in unity about remaining affiliated or disaffiliating from FUM though all present affirmed the need to continue to bear witness to FUM on the concern over the personnel policy.

All agreed that whatever course SEYM chooses, we must practice integrity and explain to FUM why we became a member in the first place (to offer hospitality to visitors and retirees and affirm unity among all Friends) and explain that now we (SEYM) can not in good faith as a body of Friends ever affirm the Richmond Declaration of 1887 as reaffirmed at the joint General Board meeting in January of 2007 in Kenya, nor can we ever accept the existing personnel policy.

Some sought a third way and articulated possibilities.

- Speak our Truth clearly, and thereby let the FUM General Board determine whether or not they want us to be members of their body.
- Remain affiliated and increase our involvement and witness at General Board and Triennial meetings, steadfastly requiring both bodies to minute our Yearly Meeting as “standing aside” from relevant decisions as our witness for SEYM’s measure of the Light.
- Disaffiliate but remain in a “corresponding” relationship with FUM and send representatives to the FUM Triennials to lovingly bear witness as way opens.
- Disaffiliate from FUM and send observers to the General Board and Triennials to lovingly bear witness as way opens.

Some considered the quote from Martin Luther King that the “long moral arc of the Universe is toward justice”, and that this work of equality is going on and will go on in many places in our Society of Friends and the larger society. We considered that perhaps we have the Light that has been given to us and that now the responsibility for choosing a course of action rests with us.

As a committee, we are grateful for the opportunity to have had this experience of worship and waiting for the Light. We believe that we have come full circle from saying, “Who are they?” about FUM to saying “Who are we? Who are we as a community of faith?” And, indeed, “what would Love have us do?”

# NOMINATING COMMITTEE REPORT

7/16/2009

## OFFICERS

<b>Yearly Meeting Clerk</b>	Susan Taylor	Tallahassee	2011
<b>YM Assistant Clerk</b>	Gary Arthur	Gainesville	2011
<b>IBM and EC Clerk</b>	Becky Steele	St. Petersburg	2012
<b>Recording Clerk</b>	Ed Lesnick	Orlando	2012
<b>Treasurer</b>	Neil Andersen	Tallahassee	2011
<b>Membership Recorder</b>	Phoebe Andersen	Tallahassee	2010
<b>Trustees</b>	Herb Haigh, Clerk	St. Petersburg	2010
	Jack Bradin	Palm Beach	2011
	Joan Carney	Palm Beach	2011
	Cathy Gaskill	Deland	2011
	Carl Hersh	Miami	2011
	Mimi McAdoo	Sarasota	2010
	Treasurer	ex officio	
<b>Young Friends Clerks</b>	David Hersh	Miami	2010
	Zach Loomas	St. Petersburg	2010
<b>Young Friends Recording Clerk</b>			

## COMMITTEES

### **Archives**

Peter Day, Clerk	Clearwater	2010
Cathy Gaskill	Deland	2010
Mark Grantham	St. Petersburg	2010
Kay Lesnick	Orlando	2010
Bill Rapp	Lake Wales	2010
Connie Ray	Gainesville	2010

### **Faith and Practice**

Phoebe Andersen, Clerk	Tallahassee	2010
Nil Wilkins	Tampa	2011
Harold Brannum	Savannah	2011
Carol Bechtel	Sarasota	2011
Vickie Carlie	Orlando	2010
Cathy Gaskill	Deland	2010

### **Finance Committee**

Caroline Lanker, Clerk	Tampa	2010
Nil Wilkins	Tampa	2012
YM Treasurer	ex officio	
YM Secretary	ex officio	
Clerk of Trusties	ex officio	
Assistant Clerk	ex officio	

### **Peace and Social Concerns**

Warren Hoskins, Clerk Pro Tem	Miami	2010
Becky Steele, Rep. CFA	St. Petersburg	2011
Cece Yocum	Tampa	2011
Susan Vaughen	Deland	2011
Shawna Doran	St. Petersburg	2010
Jack Bradin	Palm Beach	2010
Edward Hotchkiss	St. Petersburg	2010
Al Geiger	Jacksonville	2010

### **Worship & Ministry**

Wendy Clarissa Geiger, Co-Clerk	Jacksonville	2012
Nancy Triscritti, Co-Clerk	Tampa	2011
Cheryl Demers	Gainesville	2012
Clara Diaz	Miami	2012
Joan Nelson	Palm Beach	2011
Mimi McAdoo	Sarasota	2010
Fern Mayo	Sarasota	2010
Rebecca Miles	Tallahassee	2010

# NOMINATING COMMITTEE REPORT

7/16/2009

## ***Half Yearly Meeting***

Karyn Begin, Clerk	Miami	2012
Andrea Walsh, Registrar	Tampa	2012
Catherine Puckett	Gainesville	2012

## ***Nominating Committee***

Mary Jo Klingel, Clerk	Ft. Lauderdale	2011
Sybil Brennan	Gainesville	2012
Martha Morris	Winter Park	2011

## ***Committee on Ministry For Racism***

Ellie Caldwell, Clerk	Palm Beach	2011
Cheryl Demers	Gainesville	2011
Wendy Clarissa Geiger	Jacksonville	2011
Joe Guy	Savannah	2011
Betty Odum	Gainesville	2011

## ***ProNica Board Appointees***

Kathy Hersh	Miami MM	2012
Edward Hotchkiss	St. Petersburg MM	2011
Lyn Cope	Space Coast MM	2010

## ***Quaker Cuba Project***

Inactive

## ***Florida Impact***

Inactive

## ***Meeting for Sufferings***

Inactive

## ***Religious Education***

Inactive

## ***Yearly Meeting Gathering***

Ellie Caldwell, Clerk	Palm Beach	2012
Andrea Walsh, Registrar	Tampa	2012
Chuck Deneen	Deland	2012
Steve Kinney	Tampa	2012
Connie Hotchkiss	St. Petersburg	2011
Eileen Zingaro	Clearwater	2011
Jack Bradin	Palm Beach	2010

## ***YM Youth Committee***

Rolf Hansen, Co-clerk	Sarasota	2012
Catherine Puckett, Co-clerk	Gainesville	2012

## ***Committee for Earthcare***

Barbara Letsch, Clerk	Palm Beach	2011
Karen Arrington	Gainesville	2011
Jack Bradin	Palm Beach	2011
Mary Jo Klingel	Ft. Lauderdale	2011
Judy Schmalstig	Orlando	2011

## ***Consultants under the Care of***

### ***SEYM Office***

## ***Information & Technology***

SEYM Website  
Peace Website

## ***Consulting***

Sec. Lyn Cope  
Michael Shell  
Caroline Lanker  
Andrew Jason

## ***Publications Consultants***

Clara Diaz	Miami	2012
Ann Sundberg	Sarasota	2011
Ann Jerome	Deland	2010

## ***Assistant Recording Clerks***

Andrew Jason	Miami
Jennifer Mendoza	Sarasota

# NOMINATING COMMITTEE REPORT

7/16/2009

## REPRESENTATIVES TO ORGANIZATIONS

### **American Friends Service Cor Corp (NATIONAL)**

Martha Morris	Winter Park	2010
Susan Vaughan	DeLand	2010

### **AFSC - SE Region**

Jim Cain	DeLand	2011
Andrew Jason	Miami	2010

### **AFSC - SE Region - EMAP**

Mary Jo Klingel	Ft. Lauderdale	2012
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### **Florida Council of Churches**

Dustin Lemke	Tampa	2012
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Karen Putney	Tampa	2012
Peter Ackerman	Ft. Lauderdale	2011
Lou Putney	Tampa	2011
Jack Bradin	Palm Beach	2010
Frank Perch	Savannah	2010

### **Friends General Conference Central Committee**

Herb Haigh	St. Petersburg	2010
Dustin Lemke	Tampa	2012
Liz Perch	Savannah	2012

### **Friends United Meeting General Board/Commissions Observers**

Phoebe Andersen	Tallahassee	2012
Lisa Stewart	Palm Beach	2012

### **Friends United Meeting Triennial**

Neil Anderson	Tallahassee	2011
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### **Friends World Committee for Consultation**

Sybil Brennan	Gainesville	2012
Ellie Caldwell	Palm Beach	2010

### **FLGBTQC**

Kody Hersh	Miami	2012
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### **Pendle Hill**

### **Quaker UN Office**

Laura Winefordner	Gainesville	2010
Jim Winefordner	Gainesville	2010

### **Friends Peace Teams**

Cecilia Yocum	Tampa	2012
Lisa Stewart	Palm Beach	2012

### **ProNica Board Appointees**

Kathy Hersh	Miami	2012
Edward Hotchkiss	St. Petersburg	2011
Lyn Cope	Space Coast	2010

### **Quaker Earth Care Witness**

Mary Jo Klingel	Ft. Lauderdale	2010
Jack Bradin	Palm Beach	2010



12 April, 2009

To All Friends — Worldwide,

We gathered at the Florida United Methodist Life Enrichment Center, Leesburg, Florida for the 47<sup>th</sup> Southeastern Yearly Meeting for worship with a concern for business, on April 8-12, 2009.

A breeze was at our backs this year, bringing visiting Friends from afar to help us discern and be faithful to the winds of the Spirit:

*The wind blows where it pleases;  
you can hear its sound,  
but you cannot tell where it comes from  
or where it is going.  
So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit.*

—John 3:8 *The New Jerusalem Bible*

This year the Walton workshops and lecture were given by Mary Ellen McNish, General Secretary of the American Friends Service Committee. Her topic dealt with the hopes and struggles of her life, of the American Friends Service Committee, and of the Society of Friends. Both insightful and at times disturbing, the breadth of Mary Ellen's faithful service in the light was clearly evident and is an example of Rufus Jones' exhortation:

*Love won't do it without the human hand and the human heart.* —Elizabeth Watson, 1980

In the discussion that followed, working for Compassionate peace was compared with working for a Just peace. Either way, "*Do not hesitate to stand with the oppressed.*" —Elizabeth Watson, 1980

This year's agenda also included a reopening of the Friends United Meeting affiliation concern after a two-year respite for seasoning and prayerful consideration. We were blessed and thankful for the presence of FUM's General Secretary, Sylvia Graves, throughout this week and wish to publish here the minutes agreed upon in our closing plenary session:

Lyn Cope was minuted as standing aside from approval of the first minute as she considered it unnecessary repetition:

**09YBM11:** With regard to the following language from SEYM minute 07YBM15 approved two years ago:

"If at the end of the two year period our membership is not in unity to renew the relationship, SEYM will permanently lay down our membership in F.U.M.," we are in unity that one yearly meeting session's discernment cannot be directed by another, and that Yearly Meeting 2009 is not bound by that 2007 directive. We cannot be bound by the action prescribed in that minute, as we realize that discernment, being a corporate process, cannot be held in default from a discussion which was unresolved in its own time. Our discernment about affiliation with FUM is an ongoing process, and needs to

acknowledge continuing revelation. It will be discerned when the Spirit has led us into unity.

**09YBM12:**

With regard to the worshipful process in which we have engaged this year in order to discern our way forward, including meetings of the ad hoc discernment committee as well as business sessions at this yearly meeting, the results are incomplete. We moved with an intention of not letting this issue drain the energy of our gathering, and so allowed that other concerns and Yearly Meeting business have their allotted time. We did hear strong witness to feelings of pain and abuse brought on by the existence of the FUM Personnel Policy. We also heard a call to wait with fresh patience in order to let us try what love will do. We heard a call for engagement being the way of conflict resolution. We recognize that our body is fatigued by our engagement in this issue. We are both frustrated and blessed in our efforts to resolve the issue, and we will need to find time to do so. Until then, our formal membership in FUM will remain suspended. SEYM fully supports and values the spiritual gifts of our gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, and queer Friends, and we are in unity that we do not accept FUM's existing personnel policy. We will contribute to selected FUM projects, and we will continue to support observers to FUM gatherings and to welcome visitors from FUM among us. We seek to maintain a loving relationship with Friends United Meeting.

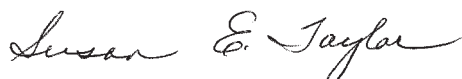
Throughout the week, workshops were plentiful, the weather sensational, and our children wonderful. The Wee Friends' presentation of Jack and the Beanstalk—a Quaker perspective—was as charming as our Teen Friends' upcoming ProNica trip to Nicaragua is inspiring. Early worship by the lake began each day with the reaffirming presence of the Spirit.

As our First Day session closed and we sat in open worship, we were mindful, and we wish to remind you, dear reader:

*That the only security is love —  
the love we have given  
and the love we have received.*  
—Elizabeth Watson, 1980

Our business complete,  
Our worship ended,  
Our service begins anew.

In God's love,



Susan Taylor, Clerk

Epistle Committee: Peter Ackerman, Mimi McAdoo, Rolf Hanson,  
Ann Sundberg, and Steve Kinney



SOUTHEASTERN YEARLY MEETING OF THE RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS  
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## **Southeastern Yearly Meeting**

Middle and Teen Friends/Jr. Yearly Meeting Epistle

April 8- 12, 2009

This Wednesday we convened for the Junior Yearly Meeting. We started our Help Increase the Peace workshop, or HIPP, by designating the gold room as a no put-down zone. On Thursday, we talked about what we define as violent and nonviolent acts. Continuing our HIPP workshop, we discussed different ways of handling and reacting to potentially violent situations. Then during the river crossing game, we collaborated with each other and practised team working skills. Later, we discussed human nature and whether all of us are inherently violent. On Friday, our focus turned to transforming power. However, we first listened to Cathy Gaskill relate old memories of her father at Fisk University and his quartet with Bayard Rustin. Afterwards, we participated in a game of Jailbreak and, during discussion, utilized the gathering statement: "the weirdest thing I ever ate was..." That afternoon, we held a fish bowl with the adults and learned about their views on legalization of drugs. During the fish bowl, we were asked questions to do with our views on our peers. These questions later came into play when the representatives from AFSC, Tim and Darlene, told us about counter recruiting. Saturday, we talked about prejudice and discrimination. Later, those of us joining the Nicaragua trip convened and were advised on what to do and definitely not to do. That afternoon, those of us not going to Nicaragua, hipped and hopped as the Easter Bunnies for our younger Friends. That night, we finished HIPP and proceeded to convene our Meeting for Worship with concern for Business and nominated two clerks, David Hersh and Zach Loomas. We decided our theme for next year will be world cultures. That night, or rather this morning, teen movie night ended. Throughout this Gathering, we have collected donations for the Nicaragua trip by selling our home-made goods such as cake-in-a-cup and strawberry jam. Those who participated in this exciting venture are quite proud of their progress of \$611.00 fund raising for the trip with the help of Davida Johns.

Young and Wee Friends Epistle, SEYM

April 8-12, 2009

The young and wee Friends, though small in number, were a closely knit group. Through creating puppets and scenery for their play, as well as rewriting a story to use Quaker values, they explored the testimonies of stewardship, community, and simplicity.

Signed: Catherine, Karen, Tor, Lis, Kate, Christi, Ann, Alina, and Keiran.

